



# Department of Homeland Security Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 08 February 2007

Current  
Nationwide  
Threat Level is

**ELEVATED**  
SIGNIFICANT RISK OF  
TERRORIST ATTACKS

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<http://www.dhs.gov/>

## Daily Highlights

- Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator — in charge of keeping power flowing smoothly among Xcel Energy Inc. and other regional utilities — says that as of noon Tuesday, February 6, 15,000 megawatts of power were flowing through the grid, with only 600 megawatts in reserve. (See item [2](#))
- IDG News Service reports online hackers briefly disrupted service on at least two of the 13 root servers that are used to direct traffic on the Internet, in an attack which began Tuesday, February 6; this was the most significant attack against the root servers since an October 2002 DDoS attack. (See item [34](#))

## DHS Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report *Fast Jump*

**Production Industries:** [Energy](#); [Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#)

**Service Industries:** [Banking and Finance](#); [Transportation and Border Security](#); [Postal and Shipping](#)

**Sustenance and Health:** [Agriculture](#); [Food](#); [Water](#); [Public Health](#)

**Federal and State:** [Government](#); [Emergency Services](#)

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**Other:** [Commercial Facilities/Real Estate, Monument & Icons](#); [General](#); [DHS Daily Report Contact Information](#)

## Energy Sector

**Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: ELEVATED, Cyber: ELEVATED**

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://www.esisac.com>]

1. *February 07, Associated Press* — **Texas issues lease for geothermal energy.** Texas has awarded the state's first lease for geothermal energy production to Ormat Technologies to explore the renewable energy's potential along seven Gulf Coast counties. Producers create geothermal energy by tapping into warm geologic strata to withdraw hot water and steam that is brought to the surface to drive turbines, which in turn drive electricity generators. Spokesperson Paul Thomsen said the project will enable Ormat to evaluate the region's potential for

geothermal energy, which it hopes to produce within two to five years. He said the company will consider using capped oil and gas wells on submerged state coastal properties. The company hopes to find adequately hot temperatures between 4,000 and 6,000 feet below the surface, he said.

Source: [http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/us/AP-Geothermal-Energy.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/us/AP-Geothermal-Energy.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

2. *February 07, Associated Press* — **Cold snap putting strain on power grid.** The Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator (MISO), is in charge of keeping power flowing smoothly among Xcel Energy Inc. and other regional utilities, as well as more than 200 other suppliers from wind farms to privately owned generators at industrial sites. As of noon Tuesday, February 6, 15,000 megawatts of power were flowing through the grid, with only 600 megawatts in reserve, according to MISO officials. "It's been at least three years since we've seen winter temperatures like these," said Eric Pierce, Xcel's managing director of energy trading and commercial operations. "We have more peaking facilities running right now than I can recall running at this time of year in the last three years," said Pierce. Tom Hoen, an Xcel spokesperson, said the utility briefly shut down power to about 250 industrial and commercial customers in the states it serves, as part of a voluntary program to reduce demand in peak load periods.

Source: [http://wcco.com/local/local\\_story\\_038072315.html](http://wcco.com/local/local_story_038072315.html)

3. *February 06, Associated Press* — **Report: Oil supply adequate through 2011.** The International Energy Agency on Tuesday, February 6, projected that world oil supplies will grow slightly faster than demand over the next five years, as increased use of ethanol and other alternative fuels combines with more supplies from OPEC states to produce a less constrained market. The Paris-based agency, in its medium-term oil market report, projected that world oil consumption will grow by two percent per year through 2011, to 93.3 million barrels per day in 2011 from 84.5 million barrels per day last year. The increase will be driven by developing nations such as China, where fuel use is soaring, the report said. The report also noted that production growth from non-OPEC nations will drop to 1.25 percent per year by 2010, amid lower production levels from North America and the North Sea. The forecast did not account for potential changes in American fuel efficiency standards, saying that analyzing their impact is impossible until new fuel economy rules are finalized.

Report Website: <http://omrpublic.iea.org/>

Source: <http://www.businessweek.com/ap/financialnews/D8N4H4PO1.htm>

4. *February 05, Associated Press* — **Second pipeline break spills oil in Wisconsin.** For the second time in a month, a Texas oil company is cleaning up crude oil spilled from its pipeline in northern Wisconsin, authorities said Monday, February 5. The latest spill of at least 84,000 gallons occurred Friday, February 2, when construction crews ruptured a 24-inch pipeline while installing another line about six miles southeast of Exeland, WI, said John Sager, an emergency response coordinator for the state Department of Natural Resources. Houston-based Enbridge Energy Co. transports 1.5 million barrels of crude oil – or 63 million gallons – a day through pipelines in the Upper Midwest, according to the company. No drinking water appeared immediately in jeopardy because the spill occurred in a very rural area in northern Rusk County, Sager said. On January 2, a 4-foot crack in the same underground pipeline spilled more than 50,000 gallons of oil in a field near Curtiss, WI, in Clark County.

Source: <http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2007/02/05/ap3396186.html>

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## **Chemical Industry and Hazardous Materials Sector**

5. *February 07, East Valley Tribune (AZ)* — **Chemical spill forces interstate closure.** An overturned tractor-trailer carrying a tank of chemicals half a mile east of Sacaton, AZ, on Interstate 10 has caused a five-mile backup and complete closures in both directions. Arizona Department of Public Safety officials said the tank possibly contained battery acid and is being handled by hazardous materials experts. There is no threat to public safety, officials said. The crash occurred when the tractor-trailer jackknifed and overturned on the eastbound side of the freeway. About the same time, a truck lost its load in the westbound lanes, causing closures on both sides.

Source: <http://www.eastvalleytribune.com/index.php?sty=83694>

6. *February 07, WCAX-TV (VT)* — **Crash causes gas line break, evacuations.** A car crash Wednesday morning, February 7, ruptured a gas line and forced about 35 people into the cold in Nashua, NH. It also stalled the morning commute of some drivers in Nashua and neighboring Hudson. The accident happened at a building near railroad tracks, triggering gates to go down at nearby traffic crossings. Police arrested 27-year-old driver Laura Little near the scene and charged her with leaving the scene of an accident and resisting arrest. Residents of five buildings were kept out of their homes for a couple of hours while the leak was investigated.

Source: <http://www.wcax.com/Global/story.asp?S=6050278&nav=4QcS>

7. *February 06, Star Tribune (MN)* — **Mercury leak closes school.** Students and parents filed back to a New Brighton, MN, school Tuesday night, February 6, with bags full of clothes, shoes and boots to be tested after some students and staff members trampled through a mercury leak as the school day was ending. Classes at St. John the Baptist School were canceled while pollution control experts and school officials investigate the extent of the leak. Mercury is believed to have leaked in at least one science lab, a hall and the cafeteria, Principal Sue Clausen said Tuesday night. Students walked through the area before the mercury was discovered, and officials have confirmed that it was found on some shoes. Tuesday's incident began when a school worker brought a box of science equipment to a teacher to determine whether the teacher wanted it, Clausen said. When the worker was removing the equipment, mercury leaked from the box.

Source: <http://www.startribune.com/462/story/985604.html>

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## **Defense Industrial Base Sector**

8. *February 07, Associated Press* — **Army confirms security contract in Iraq.** After numerous denials, the Pentagon has confirmed that a North Carolina company provided armed security guards in Iraq under a subcontract that was buried so deeply the government couldn't find it. The secretary of the Army on Tuesday, February 6, wrote two Democratic lawmakers that the

Blackwater USA contract was part of a huge military support operation by run by Halliburton subsidiary KBR. Several times last year, Pentagon officials told inquiring lawmakers they could find no evidence of the Blackwater contract. The discovery shows the dense world of Iraq contracting, where the main contractor hires subcontractors who then hire additional subcontractors. The hidden contract not only cost taxpayers money, but it might have been illegal. The Halliburton subsidiary's main contract for military support services prohibited hiring subcontractors to provide armed security. That job is left to the U.S. military, unless the theater commander decides otherwise.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/02/07/AR2007020700182.html>

9. *February 06, Department of Defense* — **Top DoD budget official outlines War on Terror costs.** The war on terrorism has cost \$545 billion to date, the Department of Defense's (DoD) top budget official said Tuesday, February 6. Pentagon Comptroller Tina Jonas told reporters in the Pentagon that Congress has appropriated \$452 billion for the war on terrorism via emergency supplemental budget measures. Another \$3 billion has been appropriated for Operation Noble Eagle, the mission providing a combat air patrol over the continental United States and security at airports that started after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, she said. The comptroller said DoD is asking for another \$93.4 billion as part of the emergency supplemental request for 2007. She projected \$141.7 billion in operational expenses in fiscal 2008. This will bring the total for the war on terrorism to about \$690 billion.

Source: <http://www.defenselink.mil/news/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=2949>

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## **Banking and Finance Sector**

10. *February 07, KETV News (NE)* — **Nebraska Attorney General offers identity theft repair kit.** The Nebraska Attorney General's Office said Tuesday, February 6, that it is helping people combat identity theft. As part of Consumer Protection Week, Attorney General Jon Bruning unveiled the identity theft repair kit. It's a guide that will be sent out to 50,000 Nebraska homes, and it explains how to protect yourself and what to do if you become a victim. Bruning said that in 2005, nearly 1,000 Nebraskans were victims of identity theft, and that it's the number one consumer fraud complaint.

Identity Theft Repair Brochure: <http://www.ketv.com/download/2007/0206/10946493.pdf>

Source: <http://www.ketv.com/news/10946511/detail.html>

11. *February 06, CBC News (Canada)* — **Bank of Canada to redesign bills again to foil counterfeiters.** The Bank of Canada is planning another redesign of Canadian banknotes as part of a strategy to stay ahead of counterfeiters, the central bank's deputy governor says. "As I speak, my colleagues at the bank are hard at work designing the next generation of banknotes, planned for introduction beginning in 2011," David Longworth said during a Chamber of Commerce speech in Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario, on Tuesday, February 7. The most common counterfeited bills are \$10 and \$20 notes, Royal Canadian Mounted Police figures show. "By 2009, we aim to reduce the level of counterfeiting to fewer than 100 counterfeits detected annually per million notes in circulation," Longworth said. That's down from 225 per million in 2006, 326 per million in 2005 and 470 per million in 2004. An internal bank report made public

last year revealed that the bank felt counterfeiting had reached "dangerous levels," according to documents obtained by the Canadian Press. The central bank considers anything over 120 counterfeits per million to be a problem.

Source: <http://www.cbc.ca/consumer/story/2007/02/06/counterfeit.html>

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## **Transportation and Border Security Sector**

### **12. *February 07, Department of Transportation* — **Flight delays and mishandled bags increase.****

U.S. airlines experienced a lower rate of on-time flights and more reports of mishandled baggage last year than in 2005, but passengers filed fewer complaints with the government about airline service than they did the previous year, according to the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Air Travel Consumer Report issued on Wednesday, February 7. According to information filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), a part of DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, the 20 airlines reporting on-time performance with DOT recorded an on-time arrival rate of 75.4 percent in 2006, down from their 77.4 percent mark in 2005. This report also includes data on airline reports of oversales ("bumping") during the fourth quarter and January–December 2006, as well as reports required to be filed by U.S. carriers of incidents involving pets traveling by air. Detailed flight delay information is also available on the BTS site on the Internet at

<http://www.bts.gov/>

The Air Travel Consumer Report can be found on DOT's Website at

<http://airconsumer.ost.dot.gov/>

Source: <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/dot1607.htm>

### **13. *February 07, USA TODAY* — **Midwest flies in the face of takeover effort.**** As the USA's biggest airlines jostle to get bigger and more powerful, little Midwest Airlines is happy to be itself: an anachronism. But things could soon change for Midwest as a result of an ongoing hostile takeover effort being waged by Orlando-based AirTran Airways, the U.S.'s third-biggest discounter. Milwaukee, WI-based Midwest, which most East and West coast residents have probably never heard of, has no desire to get rich quick, swallow other airlines or be swallowed itself. It flies to cities in America's heartland that the major carriers would just as soon fly over. Only Midwest, for example, flies non-stop from Omaha to Reagan Washington National, or from Kansas City non-stop to New York LaGuardia. Along the way, flight attendants bake chocolate chip cookies that are served free, still warm and fragrant. It recently completed its first full year of profit since 2000. The airline "has built up an amazing love affair with its passengers that I've never seen the likes of," says Midwest's marketing chief, Scott Dickson. Over its objections, AirTran has launched a \$345 million tender offer to acquire Midwest's shares directly from shareholders in hopes of forcing the board to sell.

Source: [http://www.usatoday.com/travel/flights/2007-02-07-midwest-us\\_at\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/travel/flights/2007-02-07-midwest-us_at_x.htm)

### **14. *February 06, Department of Transportation* — **President's budget recommends \$1.4 billion for major transit projects.**** President Bush on Tuesday, February 6, recommended to Congress \$1.4 billion in funding for major transit projects that are aimed at increasing mobility and easing congestion in urban areas such as New York and Seattle, as well as smaller metropolitan areas like Springfield, OR, and Kansas City, MO, Department of Transportation Secretary



Mary E. Peters said. For the first time, the budget proposes four projects in a new category known as “Small Starts.” The category was created under the most recent surface transportation authorization bill so that smaller transit projects — \$250 million or less in construction costs and requiring less than \$75 million in Small Starts funding — would not have to compete with larger projects for federal funding. The spending plan announces funding for four new or expanding transit projects, six projects eligible for funding based on progress in the months ahead, and four smaller projects. Eleven projects have received long-term commitments for federal funding and are already under construction. An additional six proposals were evaluated by the Department’s Federal Transit Administration (FTA), but are not yet advanced enough to be considered for funding. The ratings and recommendations are part of the FTA’s Annual Report on Funding Recommendations for New and Small Starts for Fiscal Year 2008.

Source: <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/fta0107.htm>

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## **Postal and Shipping Sector**

15. *February 07, New York Times* — **Third letter bomb explodes in Britain in three days.** A letter bomb exploded at Britain’s drivers’ licensing agency on Wednesday, February 7, extending what the police depicted as a coordinated series of attacks that has troubled the nation’s leaders and inspired comparisons with the Unabomber in the United States. The blast at the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, which slightly injured four people, was the third in as many days, striking mainly at institutions and companies involved in regulating motorists and automobiles. The licensing agency, located south Wales, collects automobile taxes as well as issuing drivers’ licenses. The other targets this week were companies associated with collecting congestion charge fees for cars entering central London and with supplying cameras used to monitor traffic flows. Police have disclosed that four other letter bombs had been sent in January to other businesses, two of them providing forensic outsourcing services to the police. A letter bomb was also sent to the director of an outsourcing company providing services to a tax collection office in Folkestone, Kent, south of London. All of the letter bombs were enclosed in padded envelopes and used fireworks to make the explosions, according to the Association of Chief Police Officers.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/07/world/europe/07cnd-britain.html?hp&ex=1170910800&en=f34d4d4f1ed7e261&ei=5094&partner=h omepage>

16. *February 07, USPS News Release* — **Postal Service again honored as most trusted government agency.** For the third year in a row, Americans have rated the U.S. Postal Service (USPS) as the number one agency they trust to protect their privacy. Not only did the Postal Service retain the top spot, customer satisfaction and trust scores increased from the previous year, a national study shows. Ponemon Institute LLC published its "2007 Privacy Trust Study of the United States Government" during National Consumer Protection Week. The study sought to understand the level of confidence Americans have in the many government agencies that routinely collect and use the public's personal information. The Postal Service retained the top spot with a privacy trust score of 83 percent. It also is one of the few federal agencies able to increase its customer satisfaction and trust scores. The average trust score among the 60 agencies surveyed was 47 percent. During National Consumer Protection Week, a federal program hosted by the Federal Trade Commission to draw attention to issues and ideas to help

create more informed and cautious consumers, the USPS and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service are going to hundreds of events across the country to educate consumers about fraudulent schemes and to provide them with the tools and information needed to combat fraud.

National Consumer Protection Week: February 4–10 <http://www.consumer.gov/ncpw>

Source: [http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/2007/pr07\\_010.htm](http://www.usps.com/communications/newsroom/2007/pr07_010.htm)

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## **Agriculture Sector**

17. *February 07, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service* — **Oral rabies vaccine distributed in Florida.** Wildlife Services, a program within the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service will distribute oral rabies vaccine baits across portions of west central Florida beginning on, or about February 14, to prevent the spread of raccoon rabies. Baits containing oral rabies vaccine will be distributed over rural areas using low-flying twin-engine aircraft and helicopters while hand baiting will occur in populated regions using ground-based vehicles. The projected four-week program will target raccoons and result in the distribution of approximately 540,000 baits covering roughly 2,950 square miles across six counties. Raccoon rabies is caused by a virus that attacks the central nervous system in mammals.

Source: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/content/2007/02/rabifl07.shtml>

18. *February 07, Agricultural Research Service* — **Counting Eimeria before they hatch.**

Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists have developed a rapid system for identifying which of several Eimeria species are present on a particular farm. Eimeria are single-celled protozoans that cause coccidiosis, a major intestinal disease of chickens. Coccidiosis makes it difficult for the chickens to absorb feed and gain weight, resulting in economic losses of more than \$600 million annually for U.S. poultry producers. Distinguishing between the Eimeria species that commonly infect chickens has been a challenge because their egglike oocysts are nearly identical in appearance. Producers have commonly used anticoccidial compounds that kill multiple Eimeria species at once, regardless of how many may actually infect a farm. But the Eimeria species targeted by these all-in-one anticoccidial drugs develop resistance to the compounds. The new technique can help producers fine-tune which drugs or vaccines to use in a particular poultry facility. Scientists developed a method that involves isolating Eimeria oocysts from poultry litter. Combining this process with polymerase chain reaction technology enables researchers to identify which Eimeria species are present. The new method will enable poultry producers to quickly determine which of seven Eimeria species are present on a farm. That knowledge will help them use just the right combination of vaccine and anticoccidial treatment.

Source: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/News/docs.htm?docid=1261>

19. *February 06, New York Times* — **A new problem for farmers: few veterinarians.** Across the country, veterinarians who care for the animals that provide the U.S. with food are in increasingly short supply. For one, there is generally more money to be made caring for cats and dogs. And with fewer students from farm backgrounds, fewer gravitate to rural jobs, especially if a spouse needs work, too. Large-animal care can be tough, even dangerous. And more veterinarians are women, generally less inclined toward large animals. Since 1990, the

number of veterinarians focusing on large animals has dropped to fewer than 4,500 from nearly 6,000, according to the American Veterinary Medical Association, which said those doctors now made up less than 10 percent of private–practice veterinarians. A recent study predicted that by 2016, four out of every 100 food–animal veterinary jobs would go unfilled. “We look at it as a crisis,” said Roger Mahr, the association’s president, who cited serious consequences not only for the well–being of farmers and animals, but also potentially for food safety and the impact of non–native diseases like bird flu. States are jumping in, with loan repayment or grant programs under way or proposed in Kansas, Maine, Missouri, North Dakota, Texas and elsewhere. Money is critical when veterinary students graduate \$100,000 in debt.

Source: [http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/06/us/06vets.html?\\_r=2&oref=s\\_login&oref=s\\_login](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/06/us/06vets.html?_r=2&oref=s_login&oref=s_login)

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## **Food Sector**

**20. *February 07, Associated Press* — South Korean farmers protest outside beef talks.** Cattle farmers protested Wednesday, February 7, as U.S. and South Korean officials discussed easing restrictions on imports of American beef, an issue Washington says threatens to scuttle a possible free trade agreement. About 30 South Korean farmers chanted “No U.S. beef, no more talks” and burned an effigy of a U.S. cow painted with anti–free trade slogans in Anyang, just south of Seoul, the site of the two–day talks. Farmers say imports of cheaper foreign agricultural products threaten their livelihood, and question their safety. South Korea banned all imports of U.S. beef in December 2003 after the first reported U.S. case of mad cow disease, or bovine spongiform encephalopathy. Before the ban, South Korea was the third–largest overseas market for American beef. After tough negotiations, Seoul agreed last year to allow a partial resumption of imports, but specified that only boneless meat from cattle less than 30 months old would be permitted. But tiny bone fragments were found in all three subsequent shipments from the U.S., which were rejected for violating the agreement.

Source: <http://www.cattlenetwork.com/content.asp?contentid=103976>

**21. *February 07, USAgNet* — Nebraska to ship beef products to Hong Kong.** Nebraska Agriculture Director Greg Ibach signed an agreement that will move Nebraska age– and source–verified beef into restaurants throughout Hong Kong. The agreement, signed during a reception in Hong Kong featuring Nebraska beef, includes pledges of commitment from a Hong Kong based meat importer, a meat processor with operations in Nebraska, and the Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA). Under the agreement, each will fulfill steps to move beef products from Nebraska farms and ranches to consumers in Hong Kong. The agreement is signed by Angliss, a Hong Kong importer that has a number of restaurants as its customers. Angliss commits to purchasing beef from Nebraska and working with its customers to promote the beef in at least 24 restaurants and at special events.

Source: <http://www.usagnet.com/story-national.php?Id=312&yr=2007>

**22. *February 05, U.S. Food and Drug Administration* — Snackcakes recalled.** McKee Foods of Collegedale, TN, is recalling certain Little Debbie® Nutty Bars in Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia because an ingredient may contain small particles of metal. The particles were detected through internal quality checks. No consumer complaints have been reported.

Source: [http://www.fda.gov/oc/po/firmrecalls/mckee02\\_07.html](http://www.fda.gov/oc/po/firmrecalls/mckee02_07.html)



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## **Water Sector**

Nothing to report.

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## **Public Health Sector**

### **23. *February 07, Agence France–Presse* — Indonesia signs bird flu vaccine agreement.**

Indonesia has signed an agreement with a U.S. company to develop a human bird flu vaccine and ensure it benefits from any treatment for the deadly virus, brushing off World Health Organization (WHO) concerns. Under the memorandum of understanding, which has yet to be finalized, Indonesia would provide samples of the H5N1 strain of bird flu and Baxter International Inc. would develop a vaccine and help Indonesia set up its own production facilities. Health Minister Siti Fadillah Supari said the agreement would secure an affordable supply of vaccine in the event of a national emergency in Indonesia, which has suffered 63 bird flu deaths so far, the highest in the world. The WHO said Tuesday, February 6, it was concerned about Indonesia's decision to stop sending human bird flu virus samples to laboratories overseas. It said the stance had raised questions about a global network of free virus sharing that has been a cornerstone of overall efforts to tackle influenza.

Source: [http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20070207/hl\\_afp/healthfluindonesiausvaccinecompanybaxter\\_070207113028;\\_ylt=Aj\\_KBBEgczhGzxQuf\\_uAcH96JOrgF](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20070207/hl_afp/healthfluindonesiausvaccinecompanybaxter_070207113028;_ylt=Aj_KBBEgczhGzxQuf_uAcH96JOrgF)

### **24. *February 07, Associated Press* — Doctors say superbug can be controlled.** A pilot program started at the Pittsburgh, PA, Veterans Affairs Healthcare System in late 2001 has dramatically reduced the rate of the potentially deadly germ, called methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). It is resistant to most antibiotics and usually acquired in hospitals and nursing homes. MRSA infections in the Pittsburgh VA surgical care unit have dropped more than 70 percent, infectious diseases director Robert Muder said. "You don't necessarily have to do it the way we did it, but you can do it," Muder told members of the Association for Professionals in Infection Control & Epidemiology at a meeting at the University of Pennsylvania. VA guidelines require that all patients get their noses swabbed to screen for MRSA upon admission and discharge. Those with the bug are isolated from other patients, treated by health care workers in gowns and gloves, and with equipment — from blood pressure cuffs to stethoscopes — that gets disinfected after each use. There are also administrative changes such as weekly briefings and data sharing as well as an aggressive push for strict hand-washing policies.

MRSA information: [http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/submenus/sub\\_mrsa.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/submenus/sub_mrsa.htm)

Source: <http://www.physorg.com/news90044305.html>

### **25. *February 06, Reuters* — Rich nations to sign vaccine pact in Italy.** The Group of Seven (G7) rich countries will sign an agreement on Friday, February 9, to provide \$1.5 billion to develop vaccines for poor countries, the government of Italy, which is among those heading the initiative, said on Tuesday, February 6. The new Advanced Market Commitments for Vaccines program, under the auspices of the G7, is "aimed at saving millions of lives in the poorest

countries and supporting their economic growth with new methods", the Italian economy ministry said. The mechanism involves donor nations making a prior commitment to buy vaccines which are under development at a preferential price once they are launched, thereby creating a demand-led market for new vaccines needed by poor countries. The first target disease will be pneumococcus which causes pneumonia and meningitis and is a major killer of children under five in poor countries, said Italian officials. The ultimate aim of the project is to fight malaria, HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis.

Source: [http://today.reuters.com/News/CrisesArticle.aspx?storyId=L06661675&WTmodLoc=IntNewsHome\\_C4\\_Crises-6](http://today.reuters.com/News/CrisesArticle.aspx?storyId=L06661675&WTmodLoc=IntNewsHome_C4_Crises-6)

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## **Government Sector**

- 26. *February 07, Government Accountability Office* — GAO-07-452T: Homeland Security: Management and Programmatic Challenges Facing the Department of Homeland Security (Testimony).** The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) plays a key role in leading and coordinating—with stakeholders in the federal, state, local, and private sectors—the nation's homeland security efforts. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has conducted numerous reviews of DHS management functions as well as programs including transportation and border security, immigration enforcement and service delivery, and disaster preparation and response. This testimony addresses: (1) why GAO designated DHS's implementation and transformation as a high-risk area, (2) management challenges facing DHS, (3) programmatic challenges facing DHS, and (4) actions DHS should take to strengthen its implementation and transformation efforts. This testimony contains no recommendations. However, GAO has made numerous prior recommendations to DHS in reports addressing the issues identified in this statement. Although DHS generally concurred with these recommendations, it has not identified whether it has taken corrective actions to address most of the recommendations made.

Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07452thigh.pdf>

Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-452T>

- 27. *February 07, Government Accountability Office* — GAO-07-386T: Homeland Security: Applying Risk Management Principles to Guide Federal Investments (Testimony).** Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, and the subsequent creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the federal government has provided DHS with more than \$130 billion in budget authority to make investments in homeland security. However, as the Government Accountability Office (GAO) has reported, this federal financial assistance has not been guided by a clear risk-based strategic plan that fully applies risk management principles. This testimony discusses the extent to which DHS has taken steps to apply risk management principles to target federal funding for homeland security investments (1) in making grant allocations, (2) in funding transportation and port security enhancements, (3) in other DHS mission areas, and (4) at a strategic level across DHS. This testimony summarizes previous GAO work in these areas. GAO has made numerous recommendations over the past four years aimed at enhancing DHS's use of risk management principles to guide homeland security investments in, for example, promoting all-hazards capabilities for catastrophic disasters, assessing customs and immigration systems for immigration enforcement, determining the

potential for cyber attacks, and conducting modal transportation security research and development efforts.

Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07386high.pdf>

Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-386T>

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## **Emergency Services Sector**

28. *February 07, Government Accountability Office* — **GAO-07-219: Hurricanes Katrina and Rita: Federal actions could enhance preparedness of certain state-administered federal support programs.** Hurricanes Katrina and Rita displaced over one million people and affected some of the poorest areas of the country. Many of those affected by the hurricanes received federal assistance from the Old Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (Social Security), Supplemental Security Income, Food Stamp, Unemployment Insurance, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs beforehand and others were newly eligible after the storms. Under the Comptroller General's authority, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) assessed the (1) challenges the hurricanes created for programs to take applications and pay benefits, (2) factors that helped or hindered programs' efforts, and (3) areas that warrant further attention and actions being taken to improve programs' disaster response. To do this work, GAO reviewed policies, reports, and plans, and interviewed program officials at the federal level and in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. GAO recommends that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services take steps, such as disseminating information on promising practices and further study of case management approaches as part of its efforts to improve delivery of human services during disasters, as well as work with states to collect information on the need for TANF disaster planning.
- Highlights: <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d07219high.pdf>
- Source: <http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-219>

29. *February 06, WFTV (FL)* — **Florida county without inter-agency emergency communication system.** An outdated radio system left Lake County, FL, deputies unable to talk to each other, or other agencies, during the aftermath of the tornadoes last week. The county is the last in the region without an 800-megahertz system which allows inter-agency communication. After the storms hit on Friday, February 2, deputies had to pair-up with state responders to communicate, which essentially cut the manpower in half. A new system could be in place within a year.
- Source: <http://www.wftv.com/news/10942153/detail.html>

30. *February 06, MSNBC* — **Flaws in firefighters' last line of defense.** Worn by a million firefighters in the U.S., the Personal Alert Safety System (PASS) device is a motion sensor that makes an awful racket if a firefighter stops moving for 30 seconds while battling a blaze. It's a call for help that hasn't always been heard. Tests by federal and independent labs show that some PASS alarms can fail to perform as intended if they get too hot or wet — a serious problem for people who rush into burning buildings with water hoses. Tests in a convection oven at the National Institute of Standards and Technology found a problem with the two models it tested: The volume of the beeping diminished substantially at temperatures as low as 300 degrees Fahrenheit — the sort of temperatures that firefighters encounter in a room next to

a fire. Also, some PASS devices made by at least three manufacturers have had problems with water leaking into the electronics or battery compartments, causing them to either beep continually or stop working altogether, according to interviews and documents reviewed by MSNBC.com. Later this week, a tougher new standard for testing PASS devices in heat and water will be issued by the National Fire Protection Association.

Source: <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16890732/>

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## **Information Technology and Telecommunications Sector**

**31. *February 07, Reuters* — Cell phones silent as Mexico's biggest network fails.** Millions of Mexicans had their cell phone conversations put on hold for much of Tuesday, February 6, after a wireless network belonging to the world's third richest man, tycoon Carlos Slim, temporarily crashed. A technical fault in western Mexico City saturated the Telcel cell phone network, Mexico's largest and owned by Slim's telecommunications giant America Movil, the company said on Tuesday. Telcel has 40 million users across the country. Worst affected were those in the vast capital and its surroundings, where most of the company's customers are located. Service began returning hours later and was 90 percent functional by late afternoon.

Source: <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0.1895.2091424.00.asp>

**32. *February 07, Washington Technology* — DHS still grappling with IT management.** Nearly four years after it was formed, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) continues to struggle in managing, integrating and securing its IT systems, Inspector General Richard L. Skinner testified at a congressional hearing Tuesday, February 6. "Integrating the IT systems, networks and capabilities of the various legacy agencies to form a single infrastructure for effective communications and information exchange remains one of DHS' biggest challenges," Skinner told the House Appropriations subcommittee on homeland security. In the IT realm, the department has made progress in eliminating redundant firewalls, replacing hardware encryption devices and combining operations centers, Skinner said. But component agencies have not yet aligned their programs for information security with departmentwide programs. Skinner's Testimony: [http://www.dhs.gov/xoig/assets/testimony/OIGtm\\_RLS\\_020607.pdf](http://www.dhs.gov/xoig/assets/testimony/OIGtm_RLS_020607.pdf)

Source: [http://www.washingtontechnology.com/news/1\\_1/daily\\_news/30079-1.html?topic=homeland](http://www.washingtontechnology.com/news/1_1/daily_news/30079-1.html?topic=homeland)

**33. *February 06, eWeek* — Testers shine light on CA-Vista vulnerability.** Vulnerability researchers at penetration testing software maker Core Security claim that a well-known vulnerability existing in CA's BrightStor backup software can be exploited when the program is running on Microsoft Windows Vista, essentially defeating the purpose of the operating system's much-publicized security features. Officials with Core announced the flaw at the ongoing RSA Conference. The issue illustrates the fact that unless third-party application vendors go to great lengths to integrate their products with Vista's security features, the technologies cannot take advantage of the operating system's malware-defense tools, Core officials said. Core contends that a previously disclosed vulnerability in CA's BrightStor ARCserve Backup software, dubbed CVE-2007-0169, can be exploited to compromise systems running the new Vista operating system. By exploiting the buffer overflow vulnerability in versions 9.01 through 11.5 of the CA software, along with its Enterprise

Backup 10.5 and CA Server/Business Protection Suite r2 products, attackers could remotely execute arbitrary code on computers and potentially gain access to other systems, the company said. To craft an attack that takes advantage of the flaw, hackers need only manipulate slightly exploits designed to attack the same problem on systems running Microsoft's earlier Windows XP and 2000 operating systems, Core maintains.

Source: <http://www.eweek.com/article2/0.1895.2090825.00.asp>

34. *February 06, IDG News Service* — **Hackers slow Internet root servers with attack.** Online attackers have briefly disrupted service on at least two of the 13 "root" servers that are used to direct traffic on the Internet. The attack, which began Tuesday, February 6, at about 5:30 a.m. EST, was the most significant attack against the root servers since an October 2002 DDoS attack, said Ben Petro, senior vice president of services with Internet service provider Neustar. Root servers manage the Internet's DNS, used to translate Web addresses such as Amazon.com into the numerical IP addresses used by machines. The attack appeared to have been launched by a botnet, Petro said. "Two of the root servers suffered badly, although they did not completely crash; some of the others also saw heavy traffic," said John Crain, chief technical officer with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). The two hardest-hit servers are maintained by the Department of Defense and ICANN. The botnet briefly overwhelmed these servers with useless requests, but did not disrupt Internet service, Petro said. By 10:30 a.m. EST, Internet service providers were able to filter enough of the traffic from the botnet machines that traffic to and from the root servers was essentially back to normal.

Source: [http://www.infoworld.com/article/07/02/06/HNrootserverattack\\_1.html](http://www.infoworld.com/article/07/02/06/HNrootserverattack_1.html)

35. *February 06, IDG News Service* — **Texas, Minnesota eye move to ODF.** Texas and Minnesota may become the second and third U.S. states to adopt Open Document Format for XML (ODF) as the standard file format for government documents instead of the file format that Microsoft uses in its Office 2007 software suite. Two separate bills up for legislative consideration in each state propose to mandate the use of an open, XML-based file format that is "interoperable among diverse internal and external platforms and applications; fully published and available royalty-free; implemented by multiple vendors; and controlled by an open industry organization with a well-defined inclusive process for evolution of the standard," according to the Minnesota House of Representatives bill. The Texas bill uses similar wording to describe the file format the states intend to support. Though the bills do not specifically name ODF as the document format under consideration, the explanation of what each state wants to move to seems to fit the standard. Proponents of ODF view the bills as another victory for the file format and another step closer to giving Microsoft Office the best competition it's had in years.

Source: [http://www.infoworld.com/article/07/02/06/HNtexasminnodf\\_1.html](http://www.infoworld.com/article/07/02/06/HNtexasminnodf_1.html)

36. *February 06, Computer World* — **Study: Weak passwords really do help hackers.** Left online for 24 days to see how hackers would attack them, four Linux computers with weak passwords were hit by some 270,000 intrusion attempts — about one attempt every 39 seconds, according to a study conducted by a researcher at the University of Maryland. Among the key findings: Weak passwords really do make hackers' jobs much easier. The study also found that improved selection of usernames and associated passwords can make a big difference in whether attackers get into someone's computer. The study was led by Michel Cukier, an



assistant professor of mechanical engineering and an affiliate of the university's Clark School Center for Risk and Reliability and Institute for Systems Research. His goal was to look at how hackers behave when they attack computer systems — and what they do once they gain access. Using software tools that help hackers guess usernames and passwords, the study logged the most common words hackers tried to use to log into the systems. Cukier and two graduate students found that most attacks were conducted by hackers using dictionary scripts, which run through lists of common usernames and passwords in attempts to break into a computer.

Source: [http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9010540&intsrc=hm\\_list](http://www.computerworld.com/action/article.do?command=viewArticleBasic&articleId=9010540&intsrc=hm_list)

37. *February 05, Associated Press* — **CDC Website attacked by virus.** Officials at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are concerned about a different kind of virus — a computer one. Hackers broke into the CDC's Website last week and planted a virus that could have infected visitors' computers. CDC officials said the hacking was concentrated to the agency's podcast site — which has audio and video clips on a variety of public health topics — and they do not think any sensitive information was compromised. The podcast site will be down for a few days.

Source: <http://www.ledger-enquirer.com/mld/ledgerenquirer/news/local /16626841.htm>

### Internet Alert Dashboard

To report cyber infrastructure incidents or to request information, please contact US-CERT at [soc@us-cert.gov](mailto:soc@us-cert.gov) or visit their Website: [www.us-cert.gov](http://www.us-cert.gov).

Information on IT information sharing and analysis can be found at the IT ISAC (Information Sharing and Analysis Center) Website: <https://www.it-isac.org/>.

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## Commercial Facilities/Real Estate, Monument & Icons Sector

Nothing to report.

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## General Sector

Nothing to report.

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